

OHIO

September 21 & 22, Tremont Arts & Cultural Festival, Cleveland. Contact: Scott Rosenstein of Merrick House, 1050 Starkweather, Cleveland, OH 44113 website: www.merrickhouse.org and www.tremontwest.org. Space fee: \$135 plus \$15 jury fee. Exhibitors: 100. Hours: Saturday 11-6, Sunday 12-5. Admission: \$0.

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The Tremont Arts and Cultural Festival is set up at Lincoln Park in the Tremont area of Cleveland. This park has its claim to fame from Abraham Lincoln's visit during the Civil War. Currently, Tremont is experiencing a revitalization through their many farmers markets and art shows. The Arts and Cultural Festival is by far the most competitive show at this location. This year, the festival hosted the highest amount of artists ever in the history of the show.

Upon arrival Saturday morning artists are given directions to their booth space that is located along pathways that radiate in a wagon wheel fashion from the gazebo at the center of the park. I only mention this because the closer you get to the center and the gazebo the more cramped the space gets and at the center, artists are back-to-back. The artists are organized by how many years they have participated in the show. First year artists including buy/sell vendors are all down one aisle, while second year artists are down another and then all other veterans are grouped together.

2013 was difficult show. With high expectations, artists showed up Saturday morning to be greeted by a torrential downpour after a summer of much the same. For many artists this was the last outdoor show of their season and it couldn't come fast enough. Most artists that I spoke with thought their sales for Saturday were okay considering the rainy conditions. Vendors returned Sunday morning hoping for better sales but most were disappointed due to the lack of crowds. By Sunday afternoon the air was thick with defeat. People were ready to pack up and go home and tempers were flaring by the time vendors were tearing down Sunday evening.

With many artists noticing the over abundance of jewelry artists (who were competing with buy/sell jewelry) and the organization of the show being questioned, 2014 may be a difficult year for the festival. I know personally I will be looking for greener pastures that have less jewelry.